

Federal Authority Advice Record (FAAR)

Bécancour Port Terminal Expansion Project – B6 Wharf – Société du parc industriel et portuaire de Bécancour
Registry File: 90011

| Department/Agency | Indigenous Services Canada |
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Project Summary and Indigenous Services Canada's Role in Impact Assessment

The Société du parc industriel et portuaire de Bécancour is proposing to expand the existing marine terminal by constructing a new wharf (B6) in Bécancour, Quebec. As proposed, the new wharf would be approximately 390 metres long and would have a berthing station capable of accommodating ships of more than 25,000 deadweight tons (DWT). The project would also include dredging activities and the construction of a storage area.

The Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC) has concluded that the Bécancour Port Terminal Expansion Project – B6 Wharf meets the definition of a designated project under the *Impact Assessment Act*. At this stage of the impact assessment process, the IAAC is inviting federal authorities to review the Initial Project Description (IPD) and to identify any project-specific concerns or priorities relevant to their respective departmental mandates.

The Indigenous communities likely to be affected by the project are the Mohawk Nation, the Atikamekw Nation, the Wendat Nation, the Wabanaki Nation. To date, the main concerns shared by Indigenous groups relate to cumulative impacts, the impact of increased marine traffic and the risk of accidents/collisions and the potential impacts of the project on Indigenous peoples' rights.

Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) has a mandate to support Indigenous peoples (First Nations, Inuit and Métis) in their efforts to improve their social well-being, health and economic prosperity, to develop healthier and more sustainable communities and to participate more fully in Canada's political, social and economic development.

Key Documents Consulted

- CIMA+. (2025). *Description initiale de projet, Projet Horizon Bécancour de la SPIPB - Construction d'un nouveau quai B6 et agrandissement du terminal à quai*. <https://iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/documents/p90011/163877F.pdf>

Scope of Analysis

Given the nature of the project, the concerns raised to date by Indigenous communities and ISC's expertise, our analysis focused on the following:

- The involvement of First Nations communities in conducting the impact assessment, particularly with regard to their health, well-being and socioeconomic aspects.
- The potential effects of the project on the health, social and economic conditions of Indigenous peoples.
- The cumulative effects of development activities on the health and well-being of Indigenous peoples and on socioeconomic aspects affecting them.
- The potential impacts of the project on Indigenous peoples' rights or treaty rights in the project area.

Results of the Analysis

The ISC Impact Assessment Team, composed of analysts with expertise in health, socioeconomic and environmental issues, reviewed the Initial Project Description and provided input (Table i) and comments (Table 1) related to ISC's mandate.

1. Will your department or agency exercise a power, perform a duty or function, or provide financial assistance, related to the project to enable it to be carried out in whole or in part?

Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) is not required to exercise any responsibilities related to the project. ISC will therefore not undertake any Indigenous consultation in relation to the exercise of an assignment. ISC is not responsible for approving or issuing licenses, permits, or authorizations for the assessment of proposed major projects that are not on reserve lands.

2. Using Table 1, identify project- and context- specific key issues, based on the expertise within your mandate¹ and the information in your possession, including the Initial Project Description, any exchanges with the proponent or others related to the project and known means to address the effects of the project. For each key issue:
 - a) Specify the key issue (e.g., specific species and location)
 - b) Specify the project component or activity linked to the key issue
 - c) Explain why it's a key issue based on:
 - i. biophysical effect pathway(s) from the specific project component or activity
 - ii. concern unique to the project or a priority within your mandate
 - iii. the issue being material² to decision making under the *Impact Assessment Act*
 - d) Identify how the issue could be resolved, including through means other than an impact assessment
 - e) Identify additional information the proponent could provide including to give confidence on how the issue can be addressed through other means.

Please consult Table i for ISC advice and Table 1 for specific key issues identified.

Yasmine Boctor-Moghaddam

Name and title of Departmental / Agency
Responder

December 12th, 2025

Date

¹ Refer to the [Memoranda of Understanding with IAAC](#).

² An issue is material to decision making if its analysis is anticipated to affect the conclusions on (1) whether adverse effects within federal jurisdiction or direct and incidental adverse effects (collectively adverse federal effects) are likely not significant, or of low, medium or high significance; (2) appropriate mitigation measures for significant adverse federal effects; or (3) justification in the public interest.

Table i: Key ISC Considerations for Guiding the Impact Assessment Process

| Consideration # | Key consideration(s) | Project component or activity | Project-specific concerns or priority within your mandate | Important factors for decision-making at the federal level | Additional information to be provided by the proponent |
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| ISC-01 | Protection of confidential Indigenous knowledge | Throughout the Impact Assessment process. | <p>When Indigenous Knowledge is provided in connection with a designated project, it is one of the factors to be taken into account in the project's impact assessment, in accordance with paragraph 22(1)(g) of the IAA.</p> <p>Indigenous Knowledge is often associated with the exercise and protection of Aboriginal and treaty rights. Indigenous Knowledge plays a vital role in defending the rights of Indigenous peoples by informing policy and legal and legislative processes. It supports the principle of self-determination, enabling Indigenous communities to assert their rights to land, resources and cultural expression while ensuring that their voices are heard.</p> | <p>The inclusion of Indigenous Knowledge in assessment processes must be grounded in respect for the worldviews of Indigenous peoples. This process of collaborating with Indigenous communities and knowledge holders must respect Aboriginal and treaty rights, as recognized and affirmed by section 35 of the <i>Constitution Act, 1982</i>.</p> <p>It is important to implement the principles of OCAP when collaborating with Indigenous peoples to seek and acquire knowledge.</p> <p>In accordance with the principles of OCAP (Ownership, Control, Access and Possession) and Article 31 of the UNDRIP, Indigenous Knowledge, whether publicly available or communicated directly to the proponent, should not be included without the written consent and approval of the Indigenous community, regardless of the source of the Indigenous Knowledge.</p> <p>The principles of OCAP are a tool to support information governance leading to First Nations data sovereignty. Given the diversity within and among First Nations, the principles will be expressed and affirmed in accordance with their respective worldviews, traditional knowledge and protocols. The principles of OCAP stipulate that First Nations have sole control over data collection in their communities and that they own and control how that information may be stored, interpreted, used or shared.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The proponent should implement the principles of OCAP when working with Indigenous peoples. The proponent could refer to the IAAC guidance documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protecting Confidential Indigenous Knowledge under the Impact Assessment Act Indigenous Knowledge under the Impact Assessment Act The proponent can also refer to the First Nations Information Governance Centre for more information and helpful resources. The proponent may also refer to the guidance documents prepared by the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Sustainable Development Institute (FNQLSDI): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guide to Best Practices for the Inclusion of Indigenous Knowledge for Federal Departments |

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| ISC-02 | Consultation and engagement with Indigenous groups | <p>Throughout the Impact Assessment process.</p> <p>The proponent should communicate with First Nations that may be affected to reach agreements on roles, funding, values, approaches and other requirements to limit debate and confusion once the project is brought into the formal Impact Assessment process.</p> | <p>The Initial Project Description does not specify whether the proponent consulted and engaged with affected Indigenous communities in accordance with a protocol between the proponent and the community or their own consultation protocols (if applicable).</p> | <p>In and around the project study area, there are three consultation and accommodation protocols between First Nations and the Government of Canada, as well as one protocol currently being developed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abenaki Consultation and Accommodation Protocol (2017) representing two Abenaki communities • Huron-Wendat Nation Consultation and Accommodation Protocol (2019) representing the Wendake community. • Protocol on Consultation and Accommodation of the Wolastoqiyik Wamsipekwik First Nation (2024) serves one community. <p>The proponent is not required to follow such protocols, as they are agreements between First Nations and the Government of Canada; however, the proponent is encouraged to ask the Nations for their preference. Some Nations may use their protocols to guide engagement with the proponent and private companies. Some Nations may also prefer to develop and follow their own consultation protocol between the Nation and the proponent for the specific project.</p> | <p>The proponent should consult with and collaborate with affected First Nations in accordance with their preferences. This could be an existing protocol or a new protocol between the Nation and the proponent.</p> |
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Table 1: Key Issues to Inform the Impact Assessment Process

| Comment ID | a) Key issue | b) Project component or activity | c)(i) Biophysical effect pathway(s) | c)(ii) Concern unique to the project or a priority within your mandate | c)(iii) Material to federal decision-making | d) Means for issue resolution | e) Additional information from the proponent |
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| ISC-03 | Natural and cultural heritage, as well as current use of land and resources for traditional purposes | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Construction phase: work in aquatic environments and construction zones; and 2. Operational phase: permanent encroachment on aquatic environments. | Disruption of traditional activities (hunting, fishing, trapping, gathering, cultural and social renewal) | The Initial Project Description (p. 2–3) notes concerns among Indigenous communities about maintaining the right to engage in traditional activities, such as fishing and hunting migratory birds. | <p>Indigenous peoples are deeply attached to their lands, territories and resources, and they have a significant constitutional relationship with the Government of Canada. Their participation is essential to fully understanding the impacts of major projects.</p> <p>As stated on the Implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, “Working together with Indigenous Peoples—in a manner that promotes reconciliation, respects the rights and cultures of Indigenous Peoples, and protects and ensures the inclusion of Indigenous Knowledge—is at the core of federal assessments.” (IAAC 2025c). These principles must be respected by both the proponent and the Government of Canada.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is understood that further consultations with Indigenous communities and groups by the proponent are expected. It is recommended that the proponent consult with Indigenous communities and groups to identify and document what matters most to the community, including cultural rights most at risk and revitalization priorities. With this information, the proponent and Indigenous communities can better allocate time and resources to protection and revitalization. 2. If deemed appropriate by the communities, the proponent could support community-led cultural impact studies to inform the project impact assessment. 3. As residual effects on current land and resource use are anticipated, it is recommended that the proponent prioritize the inclusion of | <p>Further engagement with Indigenous groups and communities is needed to ensure that potential impacts are avoided, mitigated, or remediated to the extent possible, and that they align with community values and rights.</p> <p>The proponent could identify specific measures to address the cultural and territorial impacts of the proposed project, including community-led cultural impact assessments.</p> |

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| | | | | | <p>The right to culture includes the ability to access all spaces, places, activities, resources, etc. necessary to engage in, transmit and perpetuate cultural practices. This includes both current and future cultural activities.</p> <p>In the case of the Bécancour Port Expansion Project, cultural activities that are at risk of being impacted include fishing and migratory bird hunting. These activities will be affected by the loss of fish and migratory bird habitat resulting from project activities during construction and operation.</p> | <p>Indigenous communities, to the extent possible, in developing and implementing avoidance, mitigation and restitution measures to ensure they meet the needs and requirements of the most affected communities. Consideration of residual cultural impacts should include reconciliation, i.e., the possibility and opportunity for potential beneficial effects resulting from the project.</p> <p>4. With regard to restitution measures, Indigenous communities should be able to identify their preferred means of restitution in accordance with their own institutions and governance systems.</p> | |
| ISC-04 | Cumulative effects associated with the potential increase in marine traffic | The project's operational phase is directly linked to the issue of cumulative effects. | <p>The increase in the number of ships using the Port of Bécancour may affect sites of interest to Indigenous communities, including hunting and fishing grounds, due to the permanent loss of fish habitat.</p> | <p>The Ndakina office raised concerns about the cumulative effects of a potential increase in marine traffic (CIMA+ 2025, p. 3).</p> <p>It is clearly noted in the Initial Project Description that the proponent is aware of the potential cumulative impacts of the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> « En exploitation, l'accroissement du trafic maritime sur le réseau du Saint-Laurent/Grands Lacs et dans l'Atlantique, bien que minime par rapport au trafic existant, pourrait entraîner des effets environnementaux sur la faune aquatique ou marine et la sécurité de la navigation (accident, déversement, bruit sous-marin notamment). Ces effets possibles ne sont toutefois pas sous le contrôle de SPIPB, mais pourront être considérés dans l'évaluation des effets cumulatifs du projet [...] » (CIMA+ 2025, p. 32) « L'ajout de dizaines de passages de navires aux quelques milliers circulant annuellement contribuera aux effets cumulatifs de la navigation commerciale dans la région, pouvant ainsi réduire l'usage courant des terres et des ressources à des fins | <p>The cumulative effects associated with the potential increase in marine traffic may have potential negative effects on the health, social and economic conditions of Indigenous peoples.</p> <p>The Government of Canada recognizes that cumulative effects are an important issue that requires collaboration and partnerships between the federal government, provinces, territories, Indigenous peoples, stakeholders, industry and the public. The Government of Canada further recognizes the important role of cumulative effects identification and management in supporting the continued meaningful exercise of Aboriginal and treaty rights (Government of Canada, 2025).</p> <p>Cumulative effects are particularly acute and concentrated in the regions of Quebec City and southern Île d'Orléans, Lac Saint-Pierre and the shipping channel between Trois-Rivières and Montreal. The most significant predicted effects at the regional level are attributed to shipping and marine pollution, according to the Beauchesne et al. report (2022). The report also states that cultural, heritage and archaeological sites are particularly</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Since the proponent intends to conduct a cumulative effects assessment, « dans l'étude d'impact qui sera remise au ministre de l'Environnement, de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques, de la Faune et des Parcs » (CIMA+ 2025, p. 32), the assessment should consider the impacts on the rights of Indigenous peoples. The proponent should collaborate with Indigenous communities and groups to review and understand the cumulative effects that affect them. The proponent could commit to collaborating with affected Indigenous communities on environmental management practices to improve information sharing and inclusion. This could include support for community-led environmental management practices (including monitoring), as well as community-based cumulative effects studies. | <p>Although the proponent intends to conduct a cumulative effects assessment, it is important to consider the impacts on Indigenous peoples' rights.</p> <p>The proponent could also include additional measures on environmental management practices.</p> <p>These could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community-led environmental monitoring activities. Studies on cumulative effects in Indigenous communities near the project. |

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| | | | | traditionnelles de façon non négligeable.» (CIMA+ 2025, p. 33). | vulnerable to the effects of maritime activities, reflecting the significant overlap between sites of interest to Indigenous communities and maritime activities (Beauchesne et al. 2022). | | |
| ISC-05 | Potential impacts on the health, social and economic conditions of Indigenous peoples and their rights | Project planning and implementation of avoidance and mitigation measures related to the construction and operational phases of the project | <p>One of the key factors in determining the acceptability of a proposed project is the severity of its potential adverse effects.</p> <p>Key measures and factors specific to Indigenous communities should be integrated and considered in the design and implementation of the proposed project to determine the acceptability of the project and the severity of its potential adverse effects.</p> | <p>There is insufficient detail regarding the proposed mitigation measures and their potential effects on Indigenous peoples.</p> <p>For example, page 28 of the Initial Project Description (2025) states the following: « Afin de réduire les effets sur le poisson et son habitat mentionnés ci-haut, des mesures d'évitement et/ou d'atténuation seront mises en place. »</p> <p>As far as this statement is concerned, there are no details on whether members of Indigenous communities have proposed any avoidance and mitigation measures, or whether these measures are to be developed jointly, led, and/or monitored by Indigenous peoples. It is understood that additional consultation and engagement sessions are required, and it is therefore imperative that the proponent gather this type of information to ensure the measures are consistent with Indigenous laws, standards, values and rights.</p> | <p>Indigenous communities are disproportionately affected by environmental risks due to historical injustices, the geographic location of reserves and a deep connection to the land for their livelihoods and cultural practices. Environmental risks are a concern that falls under federal jurisdiction because of their impact on Indigenous rights and health, social and economic conditions.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The proponent must ensure that any proposed avoidance and mitigation measures that may impact Indigenous peoples and their rights are reviewed and approved by the affected Indigenous communities. 2. The proponent must ensure that avoidance and mitigation measures consider the potential significant adverse effects, cultural rights and cumulative effects identified by Indigenous communities. 3. The proponent must ensure that the proposed approach and selection of avoidance and mitigation measures respect Indigenous laws, standards, values and rights. 4. The proponent must ensure that the proposed mitigation and avoidance measures are developed and implemented in a manner that promotes reconciliation and respects Indigenous lives, lands, culture and resources. | <p>Although the proponent intends to hold further consultation and engagement sessions with Indigenous communities, the proponent must ensure that any proposed avoidance and mitigation measures that may impact Indigenous peoples and their rights are reviewed and approved by the communities.</p> <p>The proponent must ensure that the proposed avoidance and mitigation measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take into account the potential significant adverse effects, cultural rights, and cumulative effects identified by Indigenous communities. • Comply with Indigenous laws, standards, values and rights. • Promote reconciliation by respecting Indigenous lives, lands, culture, and resources. |
| ISC-06 | Potential impacts on the health, social and economic conditions of Indigenous peoples and their rights | Project planning and risk management related to project construction and operation | <p>There is the potential for accidents and spills due to the anticipated increase in marine traffic. Accidents and spills may impact current land and resource use in the project area (hunting, fishing, trapping, gathering, cultural and social resources).</p> | <p>The proponent does not describe any emergency management plans, nor does it address communication plans with Indigenous communities in the event an emergency arises.</p> <p>However, this is one of the concerns raised by the Ndakina office on page 3 of the initial project description:</p> | <p>The lack of emergency planning is a gap in safety and preparedness planning by the proponent for Indigenous communities in the project area/region.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The proponent should proactively develop emergency management plans in collaboration with First Nations communities, including effective communication strategies to address accidents and failures. Rapid communication is essential, and notices must be issued | <p>The proponent should commit to developing emergency management plans in collaboration with First Nations communities, describe communication protocols and explain</p> |

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| | | | | <p>« Le bureau de Ndakina a soulevé des préoccupations, notamment en lien avec [...] La prévention des incidents et accidents, tant durant la phase de construction que lors de l'exploitation du nouveau terminal de vrac liquide. »</p> <p>Concerns regarding the risk of collisions/accidents are also referenced in Tables 2 and 3 of the initial project description.</p> | | <p>immediately when an accidental spill occurs.</p> <p>2. The proponent should consider the potential downstream effects of accidents and spills and ensure that communities downstream of the project that are likely to be affected are included in the emergency and communication plan.</p> | <p>how these plans will be integrated into project activities.</p> |
| ISC-07 | Social or economic conditions of Indigenous peoples | Employment opportunities during construction or operational phases | Work environments that are not adapted to and sensitive to Indigenous contexts and cultures can be a barrier to hiring and retaining Indigenous workers. | On page 34 of the Initial Project Description, the proponent states that jobs may be available for Indigenous people but does not indicate whether it plans to implement measures to combat discrimination or plans, policies and practices related to workforce diversity and inclusion. | Work environments that are not adapted to- and sensitive to Indigenous contexts and cultures can be a barrier to hiring and retaining Indigenous workers. | The proponent should work with relevant Indigenous groups to develop anti-discrimination measures or workforce diversity and inclusion plans, policies and practices. | The proponent should commit to developing measures to combat discrimination or workforce diversity and inclusion plans, policies and practices, in collaboration with relevant Indigenous groups. |
| ISC-08 | <p>The following issues should be considered in the impact assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Loss of fishing opportunities due to the reduction of available habitat. (CIMA+, 2025, p.33) • Disruption of traditional activities (hunting, fishing, trapping, gathering, cultural and social renewal). (CIMA+, 2025, p.33) • Disruption of traditional activities in the event of accidental spills of toxic substances. (CIMA+, 2025, p.33) • Increased risk of collisions / | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Construction of the new storage area and the new B6 wharf (CIMA+, 2025, p.8) 2. Increased maritime traffic and risk of accidents. | <p>Examples of sequences of effects that should be considered in the impact assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of fishing opportunities (reduced access to territory and/or contamination) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↓ Changes in the eating habits of communities. ↓ Food insecurity, diabetes, obesity, cancer, etc. ↓ Changes in the health and well-being of affected First Nations communities. • Increased anthropization of traditional territory (reduced capacity to carry out cultural, ritual, and social activities; changes to the landscape, etc.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↓ Distress felt by communities due to environmental loss or change. ↓ Stress, substance use, suicidal ideation, etc. ↓ Changes in the health and well-being of affected First Nations communities. | <p>The impact assessment should take into account, among other things, the potential effects of project activities on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in community dietary habits resulting from more restricted access to traditional territory, including the potential effects of accidents/spills that could contaminate traditional foods. • Increased anthropization of traditional territory and its potential effects on communities' self-determination in environmental management, cultural safety, and mental health. • Employment and business opportunities that could influence community income and, therefore, their health and well-being. • Any other concerns identified by First Nations communities that could influence their health and well-being. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project could have an impact on the health conditions of Indigenous peoples. <p>Similar key issues and concerns have been raised by several First Nations communities in the context of several federal impact assessment processes for projects in the Saguenay and St. Lawrence River regions, e.g., the Contrecoeur port terminal expansion project, Sorel-Tracy port terminal project, Trois-Rivières port facility expansion projects (Terminal 21), and the Saguenay north shore marine terminal project. In response to these numerous industrial development projects in the St. Lawrence River region, the Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke submitted a request for a cumulative effects assessment (Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke, 2020). This request was supported by W8banaki (Grand Council of the WAban-Aki Nation, 2020).</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide interested First Nations communities with the opportunity and means to conduct their own health impact assessments using their own tools and methodologies. If the project is approved, provide interested First Nations communities with the opportunity and means to conduct their own monitoring activities. 2. Involve interested First Nations communities in establishing the baseline status of components that may influence their health and well-being. 3. Involve interested First Nations communities in assessing the potential impacts of project activities that may affect their health and well-being. Refer to column a) Key Issues. 4. Involve interested First Nations communities in identifying mitigation measures (e.g., developing compensation projects related to habitat loss or alteration, awarding contracts to Indigenous businesses, and establishing recruitment and training programs to hire Indigenous workers) and, if the | |

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| | <p>accidents due to increased marine traffic. (CIMA+, 2025, p.33)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cumulative effects on land use related to the many industrial development projects underway in the St. Lawrence River region (Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke, 2020; Grand Conseil de la Nation Waban-Aki, 2020) • Any other issues identified by First Nations communities that may influence their health and well-being. | | | | | | | | <p>project is approved, in implementing them.</p> <p>5. Involve interested First Nations communities in the development of programs to monitor elements that may influence their health and well-being and, if the project is approved, in implementing them.</p> | |
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